1: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1940
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fanciful elaborations of nomenclature, e.g. a black ox may be called *rual mim*, charcoal-burning or *mon car*, dark clouds; a brown ox *riem dol*, red blood, or *rir dol*, red tree-cobra; a blue roan ox *bany yiel* after the blue heron; a mouse-grey ox *duk low*, the shady gloom of forests, &c. These fancy names add greatly to the list of Nuer cattle terms.

Besides the vast vocabulary which refers to colours, distribution of colours, and colour associations, cattle can also be described by the shape of their horns and, as the horns of oxen are trained, there are at least six common designations in use besides several fancy names. Words denoting shape of horns add considerably to the number of permutations, for they can be combined with many of the colour and distribution terms, e.g. a sandy-grey cow with horns which almost meet in a curve above the head is a *duot lieth*, a shorthorn with *rial* markings is a *cot rial*, a brindled ox with one horn trained across its face is a *gut nyang*, &c. The ears of cattle, sheep, and goats are often cut in different shapes and it is permissible, and with sheep and goats usual, to describe them by reference to these incisions. Sheep and goats have very different mixtures of colours from those one finds among cattle, but the same terms can be used to cover all combinations, because they are never exact descriptions of colour dispositions but represent ideal distributions, to one or other of which any actual disposition approximates.

A further range of permutations is created by prefixes which denote the sex or age of an animal, e.g. *tut*, bull, *yang*, cow, *thak*, ox, *nac*, heifer, *ruath*, male calf, *dou*, female calf, *kol*, calf which has not yet begun to graze, and so forth. Thus one may speak of a *tut ma kar looka*, *dou ma rial*, *thak ma cuany*, &c. Indeed, if we were to count every possible mode of referring to animals of the flocks and herds they would be found to number several thousand expressions—an imposing and complicated system of ramifications which bears eloquent witness to the social value of cattle.

Furthermore, as we have mentioned, every man takes one of his names from the term by which one of his oxen is described, and these ox-names are the preferred salutations among age-mates. A youth generally takes his first ox-name from the beast his father gives him at his initiation, but he may later

1: Evans-Pritchard E-S (1931, 1936) 1940
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551 take further names from any oxen of his herd which delight him. Men salute one another with these names and shower them, with many a fanciful elaboration, on their companions at dances. They also chant them when they display themselves with their oxen in camps, sing them in their poems, and shout them when they spear men, animals, or fish.

551 192 A man may be called by the identical name of his ox, e.g. Bi(l)rial, Kwac(c)uor, Werkwac, and so forth, but generally one part of the term is dropped and the other part is prefixed by a new term, usually descriptive of some ornament worn by the ox or some characteristic of it, not employed in defining its own name, e.g. *luth*, a large bell (Fig. 4), *gier*, a small bell, *luc*, a long tassel, *dhuor*, a short tassel (Plate IV), *wak*, the tinkling of an ox-bell, *laag*, a brass ring attached to an ox's collar or tethering-cord (one can be seen on the animal in the foreground of Plate II), *rut*, bellowing of oxen, *cwei*, fatness, *loi*, shining whiteness, &c. Thus a man whose favourite ox has *rial* distribution of colours may be called Luthrial, Gierrial, Luerial, Dhuorrial, Boirial, and so on. When ox-names are used between age-mates at dances they are generally preceded by dance-names which are selected to harmonize with the ox-names, euphony being considered of great importance in all these word formations. Ox-names are voluminous and abstruse, and in describing them, as in describing cattle-colours, I have not only made a meagre selection from the wealth at my disposal, but have also chosen for illustration the simplest examples and neglected the more obscure.

533 Names of cattle, especially of oxen, and ox-names of men are used profusely in songs. The Nuer, like most pastoral peoples, are poetic and most men and women compose songs which are sung at dances and concerts or are composed for the creator's own pleasure and chanted by him in lonely pastures and amid the cattle in camp kraals. Youths break into song, praising their kinsmen, sweethearts, and cattle, when they feel happy, wherever they may be. I give a free translation of the first verses of two songs, the first sung by girls as they sit together in the evening after the day's work is done, and the second sung by its creator when he is happy.

539 1. The wind blows *wirawira*;[1]
Where does it blow to?

[1] Literally 'My wind'. The singer runs against it and seems by so doing to add to its strength. This is the north wind which blows at the time of rich

8:Howell E, G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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their own affairs and the success with which their courts now deal with matters of criminal responsibility is a tribute to their growing appreciation of the need for internal security. I mention this with some feeling because in those early days it was a real struggle to resist the endless demands of individual Nuer for assistance over civil claims, a most trying experience which every District Commissioner who has served in the area knows. Nevertheless, at the present stage of development and perhaps for some years to come, the appeal from these courts is to the District Commissioner and the Governor of the Province. This being so, a knowledge of the basic principles of Nuer law is essential. It is necessary not only in connexion with specific cases, but also for the direction of policy in the development of the courts themselves. This need will continue even in the changing circumstances of the Sudan as a country whatever the nature of its constitution, and this book is written to meet it, as well as to record the evolution of a system of law.

It is sometimes argued that a government official, especially one with the executive powers of a District Commissioner in an undeveloped area, is an unsuitable person to carry out an investigation of this sort. His position may discourage sincere and truthful answers to his questions. I am aware of this argument and am prepared to accept the criticisms which may follow. Anyone who knows the close and positively wearing relationship of intimacy which exists between Nuer and their District Commissioners will, however, realize that the latter have many advantages. Having heard the details of a Nuer dispute over rights in cattle, and the same sort of dispute over and over again, he can get a pretty shrewd appreciation of the merits of the case and of the principles of law involved. Moreover, though the Nuer have a proper respect for the authority of their District Commissioner, no one could argue that this in any way curbs their blunt methods of expressing approval of his decisions, or more often disapproval. The relationship between the District Commissioner and the Nuer is peculiar and perhaps unique. He becomes a tribal institution adapted by the Nuer themselves to meet their own needs in rapidly changing conditions. He is addressed by his 'bull-name', greeted as an intimate by men and women of all ages, praised, but often severely criticized, by the chiefs. A Nuer 'bull-name' is a passport to the most intimate circles in any Nuer cattle camp or village. I often felt that it was I who had to struggle to maintain at least a vestige of the culture from which I had come.

In cases where my opinion was sought it is true that both sides would try to mislead me both on the principles of law and on the facts. I was fully aware of this. This approach did not apply to me alone; in nearly all legal disputes it takes a most exhausting process of interrogation amid a battery of lies before the truth is reached, for

S:Howell E. G-5 (1942-1944)1954
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791 fertility. Moreover it is clear that those of the second category who acquire great prestige and influence often seek to misappropriate the functions and insignia of more reputable experts. There is a tendency to assume the leopard-skin. Deng Likea, Prophet of Gaawar, did so, and his son Gaw Bang—for many years President of the Bar Gaawar Court—often conducted the ritual of homicide although he had no traditional right to do so. Kiah Lainyjok (mentioned above) wears the leopard-skin, though he would not be accepted as arbiter in blood-feuds. There is clearly a desire by these people to establish themselves in a ritual and traditional, and therefore more orthodox, status in society.

A *gwan kuoth* of repute will also claim that he possesses or is possessed by a large number of different spirits, not a single spirit. Deng Likea, whose principal spirit was called Diu, possessed many others, and he married a wife in the name of each. His sons are usually referred to first by their own names and then by the name of the spirit in whose name the mother of each was married, and not by that of their father, according to normal Nuer custom. Thus Deng Likea's sons were called Mayar Diu, Gaw Bang, and so on.

[551]

There is a large number of different categories of spirit owners: owners of 'sky-spirits' (*kuth nial*), owners of 'spirits' of the wind (*kuth dangu*), owners of 'earth spirits' (*kuth piny*) and 'talking medicines', these last being divided into a large variety of different forms, and finally, possessors of *wal*, medicine, which is usually present in more tangible form.

It is not within the scope of this book to describe at length the multitudinous concepts concerning *gwak* and *kolangwi*. *Gwak* is said to be of Dinka origin, while *kolangwi* are essentially Nuer. Under these two main headings are numerous spirits which have special names—*biel*, *mathath*, *gulang*, *mathiang*, &c.,—and special characteristics. The spirits are used to assist in the diagnosis of ills and misfortunes, the possessor acting as a medium and often going into a trance at a seance attended by a considerable number of people. The spirit is said to speak from the mouth of the medium, from a special pot or gourd, from the ground, or sometimes only through dreams.

789 *Wal* is a word which has the more literal meaning of medicine, since it is also applied to herbs, purges, and astringents as well as nowadays
754 to medicines supplied by the government medical service. In this connexion it refers to magic roots and sometimes to other objects which have intrinsic magical power and which are operated by the performance of ritual for some specific purpose. There are different forms of *wal* (one called *nyuth*, for example, is believed to be particularly potent and also dangerous), but the Nuer do not consider themselves to be experts in their use, and regard them as being of foreign origin. In fact such roots are usually obtained from other tribes, and a Nuer will sometimes go on a special journey to purchase them.

Evans-Pritchard E-S (1931, 1936) 1965
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XII

I have given a description of different types of union found in Nuerland and of the groups that arise from them. I have illustrated each type mainly by quoting examples from the village of Nyueny. I could have drawn on villages in other parts of Nuerland. 121

Some remarks of a general nature were made in the early part of this paper. Further remarks are given in conclusion but I wish to make it clear that I mention briefly only a few sociological results that arise from such "matrimonial" conditions as those I have described and that I merely sketch some of the problems that lie in the material we have considered.

One important result of widow-concubinage is matrilocal residence, temporary or permanent. I have discussed modes of residence elsewhere and have it is only necessary to show how they are affected by the prevalence of the various types of union which have been reviewed. In simple legal marriage the first child is born and weaned in its maternal grandparents' home and may be brought up there. But it eventually comes to live with its parents in the village of its pater and his kinsmen, for after weaning her first child a wife joins her husband in his village and there her other children are born. That is the normal procedure. In ghost-marriage it is the same. In levirate marriage the children and their mother generally remain in the home of the dead pater. In widow-concubinage, however, as we have seen, the children are often born and live, at any rate for some years, away from the home of their paternal kinsmen. The children of unmarried concubines live, when they are small, with their mother, whether she remains in their father's home or takes a lover elsewhere. After a boy has been initiated he normally makes his pater's homestead his permanent home. These statements apply particularly to boys. There is less consistency in the case of girls, as already explained. 577 591

A glance at Diagram No. X shows how matrilocal and patrilocal modes of residence are found side by side as a consequence of widows cohabiting with lovers in the village of their brothers. "The daughters of Jany live side by side with the "sons of Jany". Nyarunhai ♀ and Nyawal ♀ are widows living at Nyueny with their children, while Nyaudal ♀ is about to join them. Not on account of widowhood, but for other reasons, Nyadang ♀ also lives here with her husband and family, so that four of the daughters of Jany are living with their children in the hamlet of their kinsfolk.

With reference to this matrilocal cluster Biliru ♂—Lam ♂ said to me: "I live with Mesi ♂ who is my maternal uncle, for he brought me up and I was initiated at his home. We share the same byre. He has one half of the byre and I have the other half. In the cattle-camp also we share the same wind-screen and tether our cattle side by side. My position is just like that of Gobuak ♂—Rainem ♂. He shares with Tanyuan ♂ and I share with Mesi ♂". 587 591

Since they live in the village of their maternal kinsfolk these youths with the exception of the sons of Rainem ♂ whose father is resident in the 611 551

11:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1945
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589 591 611 551 village are given matronymics instead of patronymics. Thus at Nyueny one generally speaks of Bilieu ♂—Nyuwal ♀ and Malith ♂—Nyarunhai ♀ instead of Bilieu ♂—Lam ♂ and Malith ♂—Rwacar ♂, though at the villages of their paters one would speak of them by their true patronymics. One even hears the sons of Rainen ♂, Nhial ♂ and Galuak ♂, referred to after their mothers' name as gaat Nyadeng ♀, "sons of Nyadeng ♀", because they live in the village of their maternal kinsmen. The same nomenclature is to be observed when a son of an unmarried concubine lives with his mother's people, e.g. Cuol ♂—Mar ♀ who was referred to *ewriel*.

562 Another point of importance which is very obvious from the facts related in this paper is that marital and domestic conditions among the Nuer indicate the high position of women in their society. The matter cannot be discussed at length here and I will only remark that the facts cited show how freely women move among the Nuer. We have seen that widows settle with lovers without hindrance, that many girls rear a family without connecting to marriage, and women always take their small children with them when they change households, and that sometimes they even marry wives themselves.

611 The social principle of agnatic descent is, by a kind of paradox, traced through the mother, for the rule is that in virtue of payment of bride-wealth all who are born of the mother are children of her husband. Thus all the children of a woman may be children of a man whom their mother has never even seen. Or a woman may bear children by many men yet they all have one pater. Or, yet again, a woman may bear a child by a man to whom she is not married and to whom she never will be married, but this man is her child's pater by payment of a fee.

602 We see herein the fundamental principle that gives structural uniformity to, and thereby explains, the heterogeneous social elements isolated and described in this paper. I refer to the agnatic principle that is one of the most fundamental principles of Nuer social organization. It runs through the whole gamut of social relations, from ecological relations at one end of the scale to cosmological relations at the other end. This principle is not merely that every man must have a pater, and that he traces his descent through his pater, inherits from his pater, and succeeds to his pater's status. These are contained in the principle and are an expression of it, but, in our opinion, the agnatic principle among the Nuer is essentially the tendency of attachment to agnatic groups or lineages. By such attachment a man becomes a social being for his social personality is acquired from his attachment to these groups, from which he derives also, through mutual assistance, the means of existence and security.

At first sight many of the facts stated in this paper seem to be in direct opposition to this principle. Thus if we take the Jany (Kwenwar) cluster at Nueny it is evidently an aggregate of cognates and affines. The same social conditions can probably be found in every Nuer village. The underlying agnatic principle is therefore in glaring contrast to social actualities. But the actualities are always changing and passing while the principle endures.

12:Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1930-1931) 1933
F322 Nuer F322

been the name of a bullock which formed part of the bride-wealth with which his mother was married. Thus I have heard a Nuer suggest that Thiang was *thak ne ce kwen nuan* (the bullock by which his (the lineage founder) mother was married). It is seldom that the Nuer are certain about the origin of such names. The question is, however, one of philological rather than sociological importance. Often I can offer no explanation of the meaning of a lineage cognomen, e.g., the lineages of GAAGWANG and GAAGWONG (*gaat gwong* and *gaat gwong*) among the Jekany. Miss Huffman gives *gwong* for hedgehog and *gwong* for guinea fowl and *gwong* for axillary or sound of fish in water, but none of these meanings give a clue to the origin of the lineage names. Jackson (pp. 75-76) suggests the origin of the name Gwang by reference to the Kir cycle of myths and his account of Nuer names in general will give an idea of the innumerable incidents which determine the birth names of Nuer (pp. 171-173). Of Gwang he writes :—

> "On the death of Kir, Madjok was appointed by his father as head of the tribe and given the hereditary leopard skin, without which no case of killing can be tried. Matiang and Kunjokjak decided privately not to accept Madjok as their chieftain, but to deprive him of the guardianship of the sacred spear. . . . When this agreement was come to Madjok was outside looking after the cattle, but on his return he at once divined that something was wrong. He spoke to his relations and was greeted with the remark that he was from henceforth of no more account and had been deprived of the leopard skin and sacred spear. . . . His wife shortly afterwards gave birth to a boy named Gwang, i.e., the secret plot." (pp. 75-76.)

I cannot corroborate this tale, but it is a good example of the way in which a Nuer gets his birth name, which then becomes the cognomen of his lineage. It will be noticed in my paper that sometimes lineages are called after women and this is generally evident from the feminine prefix *nya*. I defer discussion on this feature till a paper on Nuer kinship in which setting it will be more easily explained.

What exactly is meant by lineage and clan? One thing is fairly certain, namely, that the Nuer does not think in group abstractions called clans. In fact, as far as I am aware, he has no word meaning clan and you cannot ask a man an equivalent of "What is your clan?"

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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231 turn into a 'Lat' (a combination of ogre and cannibal which
[778] figures largely in folk-lore tales. Nuer firmly believe in these Lats and fear them).

Nuer, be they men, women, or children love their cattle; they are the pride of the tribe. The people delight in being among them. When a boy has his tribal marks [551] cut, he assumes an ox name in addition to his own.

[325] The cattle are always supposed to see the new moon one night before the people see it.

If a cow is sick, she is well cared for. Everything possible is done for her so far as the Nuer's knowledge goes. A wasps' nest is soaked in water and the mixture forcibly administered to the cow as a preventive against a certain fever.

A bunch of a certain kind of leaves tied about a cow's neck is supposed to help her if all is not right with her when she has just calved.

Muzzles made out of thorns are fastened on the mouth of a calf when they wish to prevent it from sucking.

The Nuer also have sheep, and numerous dogs may be seen.

[242] During the fishing season when many go to the fishing camps, the Nuer depends upon fish and milk for his food. The cattle are always taken to the fishing camp—for grazing is usually good—hence the milk supply.

THE FISHING SEASON

226 When the dry season is on, the river falls fast and the
221 Nuer is eager to fish. The rivers are full of fish, great big ones, including the Nile perch and several other large white fish which are specially desired for food. In December and January Nuer with their cattle move from the villages to the fishing camps. They build (Fig. 6)
[342] bee-hive-shaped houses—even the walls are of grass.

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
F322 Nuer F322

This rite changes the status of the boy from that of boy to man. Now he may attend all dances, he may carry a spear—in fact, all the privileges of a man are his. He also may exercise authority over boys who have not as yet had the tribal marks cut, and his sisters must treat him more respectfully than in the past, for now he has a voice in the affairs that concern them. However, he must render due deference to those who have had their tribal marks cut before him.

NUER CLASS NAMES

All the boys who have had their tribal marks cut during a certain period (usually consisting of from three to eight or ten years) are given a certain class name. While no Nuer knows his age exactly, he will always tell you to which class he belongs. Those who know the sequence of classes may judge his age approximately.

Classes of Nuer with approximate age now (1929).

Lieeni	Tribal marks cut in 1917 (but only one authority for this name. All others call this class of 1917 Cai Yatni or Wum Kelunka).
Cai Yatni	Marks cut in 1915.
Lithgaac intot	Age now 20–25 years.
Lithgaac indit	25–27 years.
Carhoc	27–35 years.
Dongoaka	40– years.
Meker	50– years.
Bailoc	55–60 years.
That	60–70 years, but few living.
Nompiny	Probably none living now.
Cuatcuor	
Lajok	
Yilbith	

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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cuydar	noon.
bwoka cuy	middle of afternoon.
ke thiny	late afternoon.
ci war lip	early evening.
war	night.
wardar	midnight.

('ci' is pronounced 'chi', 'war,' is pronounced 'thang', 'thiny', is pronounced 'thinng'.)

NAMES OF NUER—DETERMINING DATES

[821] A Nuer has a splendid memory, but dates, birthdays, and anniversaries are not the things he stores away in it.

A parent may tell you in what season of the year a child was born, but after a few years the number of its years becomes but a confused memory.

When some special event has transpired which fixes a date firmly in their minds, they may date an event from that time. The time when the English patrol was in the Gurjuk country is often used when dates are discussed; an event may be dated either so long before or after the 'boats of the air' came. A flood, a famine, a year when wild animals were numerous, all may be used to mark time.

805 561 When the age of a child is asked it may be determined from the reply to such questions as:

does he crawl?	one year.
is he weaned?	(if so) three years old.
does he herd sheep?	8–11 years old.

805 551 561 For later ages one may ask 'when will he have the tribal marks cut?' (tribal marks are usually cut when the boy is from 14–16 years old). After the tribal marks are cut, age may be determined by the class name, providing the sequence of classes is known (see Chapter IV.)

14: Huffman M-5 (no date) 1931
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A woman may be asked 'If you were a man, what class would you be in?' and her age determined by the answer.

A child is often named to commemorate some event that has just occurred so the name in itself gives an idea of the date: for instance 'Rath' is famine. Possibly the boy was born in a famine year. If the family are in mourning when the child is born, it may be called 'Mun' if a boy or 'Nyamwon', if a girl. The name means 'ground' or 'daughter of the ground'.

An orphan—whose mother is dead, although the father may still be living—is often called 'Ret' which means 'orphan'. 'Bany Piny' is also a name given to an orphan which means 'left on the ground'. A girl orphan is often called 'Nyaret'.

Twins are often given names which mean 'the leader' and 'the one who was left', indicating their order of birth. The feminine prefix is used if a girl.

Ruth	the leader (a boy).
Nyadwoth	the one who was left (a girl).

A child always takes the personal name of its father as its surname, although in so doing the possessive form of the father's name is often used, but not always.

Mun Dup	name of father.
Rath	personal name of son.
Rath Mwoon	full name of son.
Pec Kak	name of father.
Nyalira	personal name of daughter.
Nyalira Pwoc	full name of daughter.

A girl's name almost always has the prefix 'nya-' or 'nyan-' meaning 'daughter of'.

A girl retains her father's personal name as her surname throughout life as she does not assume her husband's name when she marries.

15: Butt E-4 (No date) 1952 F 322 Nuer F 324

calves from it are smeared over the body. Cattle urine is used in churning and cheese-making and also for washing. Evans-Pritchard rightly calls the Nuer 'parasites of the cow'.(1) 237

The social importance of cattle among the Nuer

The fact that cattle have more than an economic value may be amply illustrated from the part they play in social life. 239

Relationships with neighbouring tribal groups are partly dependent on the value attached to cattle. The Nuer are contemptuous of those who have no cattle, while they raid those who have in order that they may augment their own herds. A man will defend his cattle to the last and will die for the sake of the herds. Disputes within the Nuer tribe are often about cattle and about the ownership of pastures and water supplies necessary for their well-being. Cattle are paid in compensation for homicide and injury. It is the needs of the cattle which compel the yearly dry-season migration to fresh pastures. [121] [191]

Cattle form the bridewealth of the Nuer, that is, the successive transfers of cattle from the bridegroom's family to that of the bride marking the fact of marriage. Cattle are formed out among friends as a precaution against the total destruction of a herd by disease; thus they tend to consolidate friendships and to maintain the network of relationships between people within a village and between the inhabitants of separate villages. [191] [191]

Family relationships are expressed in terms of cattle, as are the rules of incest and the status of an individual. Men take 'ox-names' - names which refer to the colour or other peculiarities of their favourite animals. In ritual cattle play an important part; they are sacrificed to the spirits and, when he desires to establish contact with ghosts and spirits, a man rubs ashes along the back of an animal, invoking the ancestral spirits as he does so. Cows are dedicated to the totemic spirits and the sky spirits. Daily life revolves round the needs of cattle; Nuer think cattle and talk cattle. Cows are valued for display and prestige, and the merits of their favourite beasts are boasted of by their owners. Nuer language is rich in terms describing the various attributes of cattle. Tassels, decorations and carved tethering pegs are made by the owners, while the favourites in the herd will be played with, sung to and have poems made up about them. Young men will get boys to lead their favourite ox round the village for all to admire and will themselves leap behind it. Among the Nuer there is scarcely any aspect of life into which cattle do not enter and play an important part. Evans-Pritchard writes that the Nuer define all social processes and relationships in terms of cattle and that their social idiom is a bovine idiom. [56] [172] [192]

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(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.30.

19: Bush E-4 (No date) 1952 F 222 Nuer F 222

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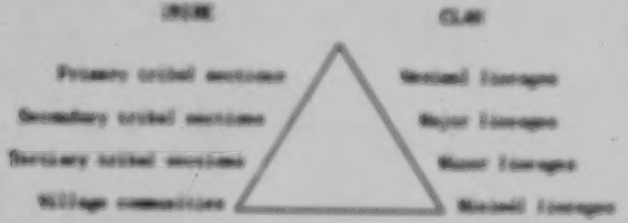
...corporate groups but are embodied in local communities through which they function structurally.(1) The tendency towards the co-ordination of territorial and lineage segmentation can be seen in various stages of territorial expansion between the household and the tribe.(2)



The action and interaction of the various tribal segments and the underlying principles of opposition and fission are seen in operation when disputes and cases of homicide are dealt with, and in times of feud and war. This acephalous kinship system has a determining influence on the nature of the age sets, on the rules of company, on the character of kinship, on the people, and indeed on every aspect of Nuer life.

NUER NAMES

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Every Nuer has a personal or birth name *(tut pay)* which is given without ceremony by the parents shortly after birth; he may have a second personal name given by his maternal grand-parents. In later life, he is addressed as *gaa* (father) by the younger generation. In addition, everyone inherits a *tut p-nak*, an honorific or praise name of the clan of his father, which is used mostly on ceremonial occasions. A man's maternal kin will tend to use the honorific name of the mother's clan.

At initiation a man acquires an ox name derived from the colour or characteristics of the ox given him on this occasion by his father. A man is given his ox name by his age mates in particular. Maidens take ox names from the bulls raised by the cows they milk, but these are seldom used except at dances.

A dance name, nickname, or traditional name may be used in conjunction with ox names at dances. In addition a man is often addressed as 'son of --' followed by the name of his father. Among maternal relatives the matronymic is used instead of the patronymic used among paternal kinsmen. A man is called after his elder son by his in-laws, while a woman who has status in her husband's home in virtue of having borne him a child is addressed by the name of her eldest child. A Nuer, therefore, may be addressed by a number of different names or titles. The one actually used on any occasion depends on the age, relationship, and clan of the speaker, and also on the response and mode of behaviour which it is intended to evoke.(3)

(1) Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer*, 1940, p.240. (2) *Ibid.*, p.248.
(3) Evans-Pritchard, *Uganda Journal*, 1948, Vol.12, No.2, p.164.

16: Evans-Pritchard E-5 (1931, 1936) 1956
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go on to say that Deng was a son of Gee, who was a son of *Ran*, man, who was a son of *Ghaw*, the universe, who was a son of *Kwoth*, God. When *Nuer* thus speak of God as their remote ancestor and address him as 'father' or 'grandfather', and likewise when in praying to him they speak of themselves, as they commonly do, as '*gaarkw*', 'thy children', their manner of speech is no more to be taken literally than are those frequent passages in the Old Testament in which Israel is spoken of as the spouse or son of Jehovah. Such ideograms are common enough in all religions.[1] Also, when Nuer speak of spirits, birds, and twins as '*gaat kwoth*', 'children of God', they speak in an allegorical sense. Similarly, when children are named after God or one of the spirits of the air, for example, Gatkweth, son of God, or Gatdeng, son of (the air-spirit) *deng*, all we are to understand from these theophorous proper names is that the child was conceived in answer to prayer or sacrifice. Even in Nuer family and kinship usages the word *gat*, son, does not necessarily, or even usually, signify a son in a physiological sense but a son in one or other of several social senses. That the language is here allegorical is shown by the use of the word *cak* in the expression '*kwoth ee cak gwandong*', 'God who created my ancestor', for *cak* means to create and not to beget. It is also shown by the fact that the word *dieth*, to beget, is not only not used in this expression but is never used in reference to God.[2] It is true that Father Crazzolara records the sentence '*gwandong ee nadh dieth ke diedh nadhe*', which, as he rightly says, means 'God did not beget men with the begetting with which men are begotten', but he adds that the word *dieth* was only used by his informant because the question he himself had asked required its use.[3] Nuer do not think of God as the begetter of man but as his creator.

God is also the father of men in that he is their protector and friend. He is '*kwoth ee jale ke yi*', 'God who walks with you', that is, who is present with you. He is the friend of men who helps them in their troubles, and Nuer sometimes address him as '*nadh*', 'friend', a word which has for them the sense of intimate

[1] Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy*, Eng. trans., 4th impress., 1926, *passim*.

[2] Cf. the Anuak who use 'to beget' as well as 'to create' of God: '*toicc na gho jwokki na cwac jil, jwok awyuol ki nyiee mi dotgi da yier*', 'once upon a time when God came and created people, God begat children with hair on their bodies' (the author's unpublished *Anuak Grammar*).

[3] Op. cit., p. 66.

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that the unity of twins is expressed, particularly in ceremonies connected with marriage and death, in which the personality undergoes a change. Thus, when the senior of male twins marries, the junior acts with him in the ritual acts he has to perform; female twins ought to be married on the same day; and no mortuary ceremonies are held for twins because, for one reason, one of them cannot be cut off from the living without the other. A woman whose twin brother had died some time before said to Miss Soule, to whom I am indebted for the information, 'Is not his soul still living? I am alive, and we are really children of God.'

There is no mortuary ceremony even when the second twin dies, and I was told that twins do not attend the mortuary ceremonies held for their dead kinsfolk, nor mourn them, because a twin is a *ran nhial*, a person of the sky or of the above. He is also spoken of as *gat kwoth*, a child of God. These dioscuric descriptions of twins are common to many peoples, but the Nuer are peculiar in holding also that they are birds. They say 'a twin is not a person (*ran*), he is a bird (*dar*)', although, as we have just seen, they assert, in another sense, that twins are one person (*ran*). Here they are using the word *ran* in the sense of a human being as distinct from any other creature. The dogma is expressed in various ways. Very often a twin is given the proper name *Dit*, bird, *Gwong*, guineafowl, or *Ngor*, francolin.[1] All Nuer consider it shameful, at any rate for adults, to eat any sort of bird or its eggs, but were a twin to do this it would be much more than shameful. It would be *muor*, a grave sin, for twins respect (*thek*) birds, because, Nuer say, birds are also twins, and they avoid any sort of contact with them. The equivalence of twins and birds is expressed particularly in connexion with death. When an infant twin dies people say *'ce par'*, 'he has flown away', using the word denoting the flight of birds. Infant twins who die, as so often happens, are not buried, as other infants are, but are covered in

[1] That the names, at least all those I have heard, are taken from birds lowest in the scale of Nuer reckoning requires comment, especially in view of the argument I later develop. It may be due to the Nuer habit of speaking of their relation to God—the birth of twins constitutes such a context—by comparing themselves with lowly things. On the other hand, it may be simply in keeping with the logic of the analogy. Twins belong to the class of the above but are below; just as guineafowl and francolin belong to the class of birds, which as a class is in the category of the above, but are almost earthbound.

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of the departed. On such occasions Nuer usually have a definite ghost in mind, but in contexts in which the lineage as a whole is involved they may speak of *jook diel*, all the ghosts (of their lineage), though I have seldom heard them do so; and the reason for this is that when, on ceremonial occasions, Nuer speak of a lineage as a collectivity to which both dead and living belong they speak in terms of spirit rather than of ghosts, of 'kwoth which created our ancestor', rather than of the ancestor himself, and of 'kwoth of our fathers', rather than the fathers themselves. The conception of the ghosts is subordinated to that of Spirit.

Nuer do not pray (*pel*) to the ghosts, which have no power in themselves to grant requests. On such occasions as I have mentioned they may invoke (*lom*) them, but even when they do this the ghosts take second place to God in some such phrases as 'kwoth, your *jook*', 'God, thou and the ghosts'. Even when beasts are reserved for them, Nuer do not formally dedicate them to the ghosts as they do to their spirits, and though they sacrifice on certain occasions on their behalf or in their honour or memory, I do not think that it can be said that sacrifice is ever made to them, at any rate not to them by themselves, for it may be that in those sacrifices in which God and the ghosts are invoked together Nuer think of the sacrifice being to both. Even if this is so, the victim is consecrated to God and not to the ghosts. Likewise, though the ghosts are associated with the *riek* or post-shrine which elderly men erect in their homes, it is a shrine firstly to God as God of the hearth and in whatever further refractions he may be figured as the guardian of the family and lineage. It is therefore called *riek kwoth*, God's shrine, and not *riek jookni*, ghosts' shrine. There is no cult of the dead, and their graves, not being marked, are soon forgotten unless a tree happens to spring from the tomb, when it may be named after the man buried there. A man's memorial is not in some monument but in his sons.

Dead persons, though for the most part only men, are remembered in their names, and this is a matter of great importance both for the Nuer themselves and also for an understanding on our part of their sentiments. Every man likes to feel that his name will never be forgotten so long as his lineage endures and that in that sense he will always be a part of the lineage. Consequently, Nuer do not so much think of the ghosts of their forebears as being those members of their lineage who are in the home of the dead,

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but rather as names numbered, so it were, in the archives of the lineage. They think of the dead continuing in this way in the living. It is to ensure the survival of the dead in their names, Nuer say, that they have the customs of the levirate, widow-concubinage, and ghost-marriage.

I have discussed these practices at length elsewhere,[1] and here it is only necessary to show their connexion with the matter under discussion. Nuer practise the true levirate. Widows are neither remarried nor inherited but continue till death to be married to their dead husbands to whose names they continue to bear children begotten by their dead husbands' brothers, with whom they have in certain circumstances an obligation to live. If, however, for one or other reason, a widow does not choose to live with one of her dead husband's brothers she may cohabit with any man she pleases, but all children such a widow-concubine may bear to her lovers count as children of her dead husband. The custom of ghost-marriage further ensures that every man must have a son who will be called after him 'get so-and-so', 'son of so-and-so'. If a man dies without a male heir and without leaving a widow to bear him male heirs it is a paramount duty for his near kin to marry a wife to his name before they take wives in their own names. In theory at any rate, therefore, every man has at least one son and through this son his name is forever a link in a line of descent. This is the only form of immortality Nuer are interested in. They are not interested in the survival of the individual as a ghost, but in the survival of the social personality in the name.

The memory of a dead man is thus kept alive by its being constantly on people's lips through the favoured patronymic usage during the lifetime of his children and afterwards in the recitation of a line of descent. This is why at a mortuary ceremony Nuer stress that a man who has died is not entirely finished. 'His children will carry on his name.' A dead man's name is also on people's lips in reference to bridewealth cattle. If a man has a right to cattle in the division of a girl's bridewealth he does not lose that right at death. Indeed, if he is dead he not only retains the right but his claims are given precedence, as being 'the right of a ghost', over those of the living. These cattle are *ghok jookni*,

[1] 'Some Aspects of Marriage and the Family among the Nuer', *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Rechtswissenschaft*, 1938 (reprinted in *Rhodes-Livingstone Papers*, No. XI, 1945); also *Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer*, 1951, chaps. iii and iv.

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'cattle of the ghosts', and they must be handed over to his sons, at once if they are adults, and later if they are children. It is a grave fault for a kinsman to take advantage of the minority of children to use the cattle of ghosts for his own purposes. The rights of the dead in bridewealth cattle derive not only from the fact that it is their kinswoman who is being married but also from the feeling Nuer have that a line of descent is attached to its herd. Whatever individual may have control over the herd it is thought of as being in a vague general sense owned by the ghosts who once tended it, for though the animals change the herd is felt to have a sort of continuity. This is partly why the ghosts are addressed in invocations at weddings. It must be explained to those on the bridegroom's side that the cattle are leaving the herd so that a girl of another lineage may come into the family to bear sons who will continue their own lineage; and it must be explained to those on the bride's side that she is being married with cattle which will enable her family to acquire a wife who will bear sons to continue their lineage.

The great importance attached to the maintenance of a dead man's name and the privileges and obligations of the living which derive from their relationship to him—*ciek* joke, ghost's wife, *gat* joke, ghost's son, and so on—give sharp individuality to the dead; and it is interesting to note that in the Nuer language the word for the departed has singular and plural forms, unlike many languages in Africa and elsewhere, which, like the Latin *manes*, can indicate only a collectivity. It is possible that we are to seek in the desire for survival of the self in the name—not just survival in the children—the reason for the fact that Nuer do not, at any rate in normal circumstances, care to call a son by the same name as his father and even show aversion at the suggestion that one might do so. Were father and son to bear the same name they would be likely in course of time to become merged in the recitation of a genealogy. I think Nuer realize this. However, it would be necessary, were such an interpretation advanced, to account for the fact that some of the other Nilotic peoples have no objection to father and son bearing the same name, the Anuak for instance, and Dr. Lienhardt tells me that it is also the case among the Dinka.

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196 576 264 Nuer use it for the attitude and behaviour expected of a man towards his wife's parents and to a lesser extent her other kinsmen also. He expresses his respect particularly by abstaining from eating in their homes and from appearing naked before them. A newly married woman respects her husband's people, especially his parents. She is circumspect in her relations with them, avoiding the parents as far as is practicable. Until her first child is born she may not eat in the home of her husband's parents—that is to say, in her husband's home. Newly wedded husbands and wives respect one another. In public each treats the other with marked reserve and they will not eat together, or even see each other eat or drink, till some time after their first child is born. Of the many European habits which are strange to Nuer the one I have heard them speak of with the greatest disapproval is that of a man eating [551] with his wife in public. Husband and wife also respect each other's name by avoiding its use. Sweethearts display similar behaviour. The respect a husband shows to his wife's parents and her respect for his parents is shared in varying degrees by the kin on both sides and for varying periods of time. I need not discuss details here. It may, however, be noted that avoidance with regard to food and drink between affines which is likely to have altogether lapsed, except in the case of the husband's avoidance of his wife's parents, and to have been relaxed even in his case with time and the birth of children, is demanded with extreme vigour should the wife bear twins. Then the paternal and maternal kin of the twins are for a short time in the position of parties to a blood-feud. They may not, under penalty of death (*nueer*), eat or drink or share a pipe together until sacrifices, the meat of which is divided between them, have been made.

196 583 784 There are also avoidances concerning bridewealth cattle which derive from these relationships of respect relating to marriage. A bride respects the *ghok lipe*, the cattle of her betrothal. These are the cattle her future husband hands over in earnest of his intention to marry her, and they count as the first payment of her bridewealth. She will not drink of their milk, lest she harm the cattle by doing so, till after the ritual consummation of the union, and possibly not even then, for I was also told by some Nuer that while she is still newly wedded and has not yet borne a child (*ciek ma kau*) she abstains from the milk of the cows her husband's people have paid for her. Likewise, even when a husband can drink milk